

## California and Western Medicine

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evident, it must be acknowledged to be a somewhat surprising circumstance, that the number of American and foreign periodicals in medicine and its closely allied sciences, which must be utilized in compiling the "Quarterly Cumulative Index Medicus," should exceed the number of eighteen hundred; and that the total number of subject titles which must be yearly catalogued and cross-indexed should exceed the appalling total of fifty thousand topics! With such a mass of yearly scientific material, it is no wonder that the conjoint efforts of the Surgeon-General's Library, the Carnegie Institute of Washington, and the American Medical Association should be necessary to produce that work, which enables American and other physicians to have access to an authoritative yearly index to current medical literature. It is indeed a fortunate arrangement that permits these three great agencies to produce this publication which is of such vital importance, to all research and other investigators in medicine who desire to consult collateral articles at their source, in their special fields of study and interest.

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CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE is one of these eighteen hundred periodicals just referred to. What reasons can it give for its existence?

With all due regard to the high standing of California physicians and their ability to do their proportionate part in maintaining and promoting the progress of scientific medicine, it would take a brave heart to insist that our state journal, from purely the scientific standpoint, was indispensable to the world.

As a matter of fact it does not and never has made any such pretension; and its owners, the members of the California Medical Association, at no time have ever had such a major aspiration for it. While it is true that CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE whole-heartedly subscribes to, and enthusiastically supports all medical literature produced by California physicians which measures up to the highest standards of literary and scientific excellence, and hopes that an increasing number of articles of such type will appear between its covers, it recognizes that the production and publication of such super-excellent papers by California physicians is something over and above and beyond itself. While CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE gladly lends its encouragement to all who produce or seek to produce such theses, at the same time it must carry on with such studies and papers as are actually brought forth by the members of the C. M. A. Of their work, it feels that the members of the California Medical Association need not make undue apology. Whatever that work may be, and to what greater or lesser height of standards the papers through which the studies are presented, could or should measure, it may be assumed that, inasmuch as these contributions are largely the discourses which are presented at the annual and other meetings of the California Medical Association and the component county societies, that

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## EDITORIALS

### THE REASON WHY OF A STATE MEDICAL JOURNAL

From the days about the year 1450, when Gutenberg and Mentz revealed to the western world the allurements to be found in reproducing words and thoughts through the use of letter blocks, the printing press has been of inestimable value in the dissemination of knowledge. Through printed word man acquires most of the facts which give him a basis for reflection and which serve him as a guide to conduct and action.

The printed textbooks used in the medical curriculum are a foundation basis for the physician's mental armamentarium. After his graduation from his medical school the physician continues to purchase medical books, and he nearly always also acquires the subscription habit to one or more medical journals.

It is upon these medical periodicals that the physician in part depends to keep himself informed of the advances of his science, as well as to keep him in touch and in fraternal and proper contact with fellows of his own guild. Medical journals exist then, because they are an especially effective means of bringing desired knowledge to busy practitioners, both on what individual members and the guild as a whole are doing.

While the need of the printed page in the dissemination of medical knowledge is therefore

they are a fair reflection or average of the scientific tone and literary standards of the California profession at the time of such presentation and publication.

And if these papers be not, then the reflection and criticism should not be upon either those colleagues who contribute to the sessions, or on the state journal which prints them; but on such colleagues who, possessing knowledge and literary ability able to produce better discourses and papers, nevertheless fall short of their obligations to organized medicine, and particularly to the California Medical Association, by not taking a more active part in the proceedings of its own and the county society meetings.

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Therefore, one of the major functions of a state medical journal is to present the output of the members of the state association and its component county societies; to the end that the formal opinions and carefully considered viewpoints of the essayists who contribute messages to these organizations, in California, for instance, may be made more readily available to the more than five thousand subscribers to this journal.

But in equal and perhaps in even more important manner, it is the function of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE to act as a medium of interchange of opinion on matters of economic, fraternal and other professional interest. For in our devotion to the standards of either abstract or applied medical science, let none of us waft ourselves away in an aura of self-satisfaction or complacency, that through such devotion, our economic, legal and other interests may be left to care for themselves. Such is not the case, for we live in a day when the strife is to the quick, and they who count on the goodness, generosity, and appreciation or altruistic thought from either lay fellows, or at times, even of physician fellows, may have opportunity to repent of such philosophical abstraction, when rights and privileges which should be an inherent part of so noble a profession as that of the healing art, are insidiously or forcibly taken from it.

These thoughts are penned because there be among us, some, who at times seem not to sense quite fully the need of an organized profession, and who seem to forget that through just such an organized profession they themselves flourish more than would otherwise be the case. There be few busy physicians who do not profit from their affiliations with fellows, who send patients for consultation, and who in return ask nothing but that good service be rendered the patients so sent. Nevertheless there is an obligation involved in this; and that has to do with the fact that the prominent and able consultant shall reciprocate for this confidence in him, by placing himself in full communion with his fellows at their annual sessions, and by giving of his very best to these colleagues, upon whose good-will and cooperation

his own success is often so very largely founded. The greater the knowledge and ability of any one of us in our guild, just that much greater should be our obligation to share of the same with our fellows.

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To make the pages of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE replete with messages coming from thinking and observing members of the profession, from one end of this great state to the other; to have the topics discussed be of wide range and of such character as to be provocative of keen thought by all readers, and to old and young members of the profession alike, to be an inspiration, to keep themselves alert and in step with the progress of scientific medicine; to present to the members of the Association the problems confronting the physicians of today, and the manner in which the officers of the state and county societies are striving to solve these problems for the advancement of the profession and the protection of the interests of its members; to serve as a medium of fraternal interchange of opinion among the members on all matters directly or indirectly concerned with the work of physicians—these are some of the objects which the Council of the California Medical Association and its delegated editorial representatives keep constantly in mind.

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These objects as here briefly presented would seem to be an ample sufficiency and very adequate and proper reasons, why CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE has a right to exist and have a place in the sun. And through the whole-hearted and loyal support of a host of able colleagues and coworkers this journal as time goes on should give increasing reasons for its continuance.

Its founder, the late Philip Mills Jones, when our journal was in its baby clothes, made a name for it through its espousal of the principle that all high-grade medical journals should expunge from the advertising pages, all undesirable announcements; the editor and Council hesitating not to give valiant and effective battle to the journal of the national association at that time, until that important issue was properly and decently settled.

His successors, and especially its recent editor, the late William Everett Musgrave, carried it forward in increasing worth and capacity. With its honorable past, and the support of so outstanding a profession as exists in California, CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE cannot do otherwise than to continue to progress and be an increasing influence for effective service not only to its members, but to the citizens of our own great state and the adjacent commonwealths. The cooperation and support of every member of the California, Utah, and Nevada Medical Associations are desired in order to accomplish these good ends.